

BELMONT COUNCIL ON AGING
Board Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2008

Board Members Present: J. Semuels, J. Bruschi, H. Dvorak, E. Hamann, J. Horner, J. Kantor, H. Kazarian, A. Lougee, B. Miranda, P. Solomon; N. Niv-Vogel, Director.

Board Members Absent: N. Hegarty

The minutes of the December 3, 2007 board meeting were unanimously approved with one correction: under the paragraph on expansion of the board, the word "meeting" should be spelled with two e's.

There were no items for discussion under *Senior Citizens' Concerns* or *General Announcements*.

Springwell: A report on Springwell activities will be given at the next meeting.

Director's Report: The budget hearing with the Board of Selectmen and the Warrant Committee will take place on January 26. The subcommittee under which the stocktickerCOA falls has not yet requested a meeting. It is not known at the present time which of the possible budget scenarios the selectmen will wish to discuss: a 10% reduction, a 10% increase, a level service budget or the newly prepared zero based budget. In a reduced budget plan, the Director has chosen to cut a little from each program, rather than eliminating items completely.

The Annual Holiday party was a great success even though the snowstorm hit at the same time.

A volunteer has come forth to take the place of Bill and Edna Skelley in running the weekly bingo game.

The fuel assistance program is a very important service, particularly in times of high energy prices and cold and stormy weather. Anyone wishing to apply, including non seniors, should contact Marie Poore.

Pat Smith, the new SHINE counselor, is taking appointments, usually clustered at mid-day each Friday.

The board was reminded that if schools in Belmont are closed due to snow, the stocktickerCOA programs are also closed. The office usually remains open unless a state of emergency is declared. If a storm is predicted, Meals on Wheels volunteers deliver two meals on the day before.

Senior Center Building Committee: P. Solomon announced that the construction contract has been awarded to Groom Construction Company, a company which has had experience in green building work. Contract documents are being prepared and the signing is planned for January 28 at the Board of Selectmen's meeting. The company would be expected to finish the project in 306 working days.

Friends of Belmont stocktickerCOA: The Friends will be meeting on January 16 at 7:30 at the Senior Center. Reminders for long term pledges have gone out. 50-55% of pledges have been collected so far. Letters will be sent to all donors updating them on the progress of the project.

New Business: A brief discussion was held on the types of activities likely to appeal to the upcoming senior population: lectures, writing workshops, poetry workshops, concerts, etc.

The Director reminded the board that Ann Howard initiated several years ago a tax-checkoff on Belmont's property tax bills for furnishings for the new center, and that this fund now has \$18,000 which can be used independently of Friends fundraising for the construction.

Media Relationships: The board discussed the elimination of the Richard Griffin column from the Belmont Citizen-Herald. Editor Anthony Schinella has been invited to the board's February meeting to discuss coverage of senior news, in general.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Miranda

